

Small Woodlands Association Hosts Local Tree Farm Tour

The Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA) and the Oregon Society of American Foresters co-sponsored a tour of the Courter Tree Farm on Timber Road, just outside Vernonia, on Saturday, August 17. The event was hosted by the Columbia County Chapter of OSWA, and featured a tour of the Courter property, which showcased the history of the property and their sustainable forestry practices, visited several different stands of mature and younger trees, and included several guest speakers.

Dick Courter welcomed the nearly 100 guests to the tour and gave a brief history

of the family's involvement in the 54 acre property. Dick and wife Gayanne's family have owned the tree farm for nearly



Mike Pihl and Dick Courter

80 years – it belonged to Gayanne's family originally. Dick formerly worked for Crown Zellerbach and continues to work as a professional consulting forester.

OSWA Executive Director Jim James was on hand and Bob Alverts, a past president of the Oregon Society of American Foresters, addressed the audience. Also in attendance were staff from the Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State University Extension Service.

During the tour, local logger Mike Pihl provided some insight on a recent harvest his crew had done on the property.

continued on page 11



VHS Fall Sports Preview

Veteran volleyball squad has eye on league title, football kicks off new era, boys cross country squad looks strong

By Scott Laird

Volleyball – Head coach Teresa Williams returns a veteran squad with loads of talent and experience after finishing 2nd in the Northwest League last year. The Lady Loggers will have six seniors leading the way this season, along with a handful of other talented players, and should be one of the top three teams competing for the league title.

Senior outside hitter Jordan Walters, last year's runner up in Player of Year voting in the league, is the team captain this year and should be the squad's main offensive threat, as well as playing defense on the back line.

Sophomore Brooklynn Walters, a starting outside hitter last year, will take over setting duties, although Williams was toying with a formation in preseason that would rotate senior Jessi-

ca Butcher into the setter spot and utilize Walters as a part-time outside hitter. "Brooklynn still has some things to learn about the setter position, but she's so athletic that I don't expect it to take long for her to get comfortable there," says Williams.

Williams is looking for senior middle Lauren Ely to take her game up a notch this season and contribute more offensively.

Look for seniors Abby and Isabelle Coleman to be an important part of the rotation. Athletic sophomore Nita Cook will see some time as an outside hitter, and can play in the back line, after showing good promise as a freshman last year. Sophomore Audrey Hill and freshman Kortnie Adams give Williams some more height and will compete for playing time in the middle of the front line.



Left: Jordan Walters leads a veteran and talented volleyball squad. Above: Vernonia football will play their first game on their new field on September 13.

The Lady Loggers took part in a preseason jamboree on August 29, where they struggled to find their rhythm and went 1-3. They kicked off non league play on August 31 at the Kennedy Tournament where they went 2-2, beating Blanchet Catholic and Reedsport, and falling to St. Paul and Salem Academy. Williams noted the strong play of Brooklyn Walters at that tournament.

The Lady Loggers will compete

in the Heppner East/West Challenge tournament on September 7, before starting league play with away games at Faith Bible on September 9 and Manahouse Christian (formerly City Christian) on September 11. They host the Vernonia Tournament on September 14, travel to face Catlin Gabel September 16 and host Neah-Kah-Nie on September 17. District Playoffs are scheduled to begin on October 22.

continued on page 3

inside

6 summertime low flows

10 rat 'n rod revival

12 meet the new teachers



WOEC Annual Meeting Report

West Oregon Electric Cooperative celebrated their 75th anniversary at the Annual Meeting on August 17 at the Vernonia Schools Commons.

Board President Brett Costley and General Manager Bob Perry welcomed the membership and introduced the Board of Directors, special guests, and WOEC staff in attendance.

Board President Costley addressed the membership and noted the apparent success of using electronic ballots for the first time for the co-op's elections this year, stating participation in the election was up about 10%, and said the process went smoothly.

The big news of the day was the results of the elections for Board of Directors, which saw Mark Kaminski elected to Position #2 and Erika Paleck winning the Position #5 seat. Kaminski unseated long-time Director and for-

mer Board President Robert Van Natta. Van Natta, who has served the membership as a Board member for over three decades, received a standing ovation from the membership when he was recognized by current Board President Costley for his service. Paleck took the seat formerly held by Nick Galaday, who did not run for re-election.

Chief Financial Officer Dan Huggett told the membership that financially 2019 is looking good so far, even though sales of electricity to members is down about 7% due to a mild winter and cool summer. Huggett said the co-op received a clean audit again this year. He reminded members of the different ways they can access their account and pay their bill, including using budget billing.

Executive Assistant Billi Kohler explained the process the co-op

has put in place to reduce the number of shut-offs for nonpayment each month. Kohler said efforts by customer service representatives to contact members has reduced shut-offs from 124 in 2014, to just 23 in 2018 – an 84% reduction.

Operations Manager Don Rose discussed the ongoing construction project involving the Mist line rebuild, which is being undertaken by current line staff, saving the co-op on expenses. Rose said right-of-way mowing projects have continued this year, with 52 miles completed last year and 26 more miles so far this year. Rose also discussed the meter checks across the territory that took place during the past year.

General Manager Perry talked briefly about planning for upcoming retirements over the next several years.

continued on page 11